

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Kansas
COUNTY:	Franklin
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE:	

1. NAME	
COMMON:	
AND/OR HISTORIC:	Ransom, James H., House
059-4270-0275+0276	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 318 South Locust			
CITY OR TOWN: Ottawa		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: no. 3, Larry Winn	
STATE Kansas	CODE 20	COUNTY: Franklin	CODE 059

3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: D. L. and Betty Salsbury			
STREET AND NUMBER: 318 South Locust			
CITY OR TOWN: Ottawa		STATE: Kansas	CODE 66067 20

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Registry of Deeds			
STREET AND NUMBER: Franklin County Courthouse			
CITY OR TOWN: Ottawa		STATE: Kansas	CODE 66067 20

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic Sites Survey			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1970 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Kansas State Historical Society			
STREET AND NUMBER: 120 West Tenth Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Topeka		STATE: Kansas	CODE 66612 20

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

(Check One)

☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

☐ Altered ☒ Unaltered

(Check One)

☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The James Ransom house is a large irregularly shaped two-story frame residence with a full basement and a full attic designed as a third floor. The house faces east and on the east facade features a circular porch with a conical roof. There is a carriage porch to the north and a handsome carriage house at the rear.

This white frame Victorian house has an unusual array of ornamental millwork, and patterned shingles are used for siding on the exterior above the first floor. The house rests on a raised base of rough hewn limestone laid in uniform horizontal courses and has distinctive belt lines at the floor lines.

The roof form is basically intersecting gables with the front gable having a mock hip shape. The roof form at the front also leads directly into the conical roof of the second floor circular balcony above the main entry. The first floor circular porch roof, which is designed to accent the entry, includes a large pediment displaying the house number directly over the front steps. The circular porch wraps around the north side of the house, leading to the hipped roof carriage porch. The second floor balcony, which helps accent the curved porch, is reminiscent in character of English country houses. The roof shingles are wood.

The windows are simple rectangles of varied sizes, and the trim is basic and simple. The attic windows are trimmed with brackets which meet the roof overhang and have the characteristics of cornice brackets. Both the porch and balcony roofs are supported by turned frame columns with brackets.

The two-story stable at the rear measures 30 by 50 feet and, like the house has shingle siding above the first floor. The roof is basically a gable roof, however the ends form a mock hip similar to the front gable of the house. The east side has twin windowless dormers.

Accenting the roof is a cupola with a curved hip roof form.

The exteriors of both the house and carriage house are believed to be basically unaltered. The present owners are now in the process of restoring them and have started with the carriage house, which has been painted its original gold and rust colors.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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8. SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1889-1890			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>The James H. Ransom house was built around 1889-1890 for one of Franklin county's most active and successful businessmen and investors. Ransom was a native New Yorker who taught school in Illinois and worked in the Pennsylvania oil fields before moving to Kansas in 1868. He was not a man who remained long in one place and the history of his business activities in Kansas shows a wide-ranging career.</p> <p>Upon his arrival in the state he operated a dairy farm for one year at Burlington (Coffey county) and then moved to the Clinton area (Douglas county) where he had a flour and saw mill and also farmed. After six years he moved to nearby Lawrence and opened a wholesale and retail coal business. Earlier he had purchased two coal mines at Carbondale (Osage county). In 1878 he moved to Williamsburg in Franklin county and that county was to remain his permanent home. He bought and operated the mines of the Williamsburg Coal Company. One year later he opened new mines three miles east of Williamsburg and established the town of Ransomville at the site. In addition to his mining operations, he started a general store in the town and his daughter Myra was the town's first postmaster. In 1886 he moved to Ottawa and started a coal business and later an ice company.</p> <p>In the 1890's Ransom's business interests were concentrated more on construction and less on coal mining. He recognized that the thin vein of coal in eastern Kansas could not be profitably mined in competition with the deeper veins of southeastern Kansas. The contracting firm of Ransom and Cook was well-known for its construction activities, particularly for building railroads. His farming and associated interests, such as dairying, a creamery, and livestock breeding, continued throughout his life.</p> <p>In spite of his many business involvements, Ransom was able to serve two terms in the Kansas House of Representatives, from 1905 to 1909, and earlier he was on the Ottawa city council.</p> <p>Around 1889-1890 he built a large Victorian house in Ottawa. One of the showplaces of the community at the time, the house was his residence until 1901, when his first wife died. In that same year he sold (or gave) the house to his daughter Myra and her husband B. D. Bennett. His Ottawa business interests were also disposed of to Bennett and he returned to Ransomville. The Bennetts occupied the house</p>			

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

8.

for many years and were active in Ottawa's business and civic affairs. The house apparently remained in the Bennett family until 1949.

James Ransom was a prominent and successful businessman. His many and varied business pursuits and his frequent changes of location make him a typical entrepreneur of an era when Kansas was a young, developing state. He was set apart perhaps by the degree of success which he attained.

The Ransom house has been termed the best example of Victorian residential architecture in Ottawa. The large house together with its carriage house presents a cohesive unit significant for its distinctive 1890's architectural features and significant for its first occupant, James Ransom, and his contributions to the economic development of the area.

9.

Reflections of Franklin County and Chautauqua Days (Ottawa, Kansas, n.p., 1961), p. 32.
Topeka Daily Capital, May, 1906.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Connelley, W. E., History of Kansas and Kansans, Part II (Chicago: Standard Publishing Company, 1912), pp. 1046, 1047.
History of the State of Kansas (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), p. 621.
Leavenworth Appeal and Tribune, February 10, 1880.
Legislative Handbook, 1905 (Topeka: Crane and Company, 1905), p. 188.
Portrait and Biographical Record of Leavenworth, Douglas and Franklin Counties (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1899), pp. 310, 311.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"		
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"		
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"		
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"		

LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
38	36	49	95	16	17

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Richard D. Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey	
ORGANIZATION Kansas State Historical Society	DATE May 7, 1974
STREET AND NUMBER: 120 West Tenth	
CITY OR TOWN: Topeka	STATE Kansas
	CODE 20

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☒

Name Nyle H. Miller
Nyle H. Miller

Title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

Date August 1, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS